CLAIM AMENDMENTS (MARKED)

1. (Currently Amended) A composite, metal and plastic pipe assembly, comprising: first and second metal ~~pipe sections~~ pipes having respective first and second ends; a first plastic [spigot] cuff formed along the periphery of the first pipe end and embedding the first pipe end therein; [and] a second plastic [bell] cuff formed along the periphery of the second pipe end and embedding the second pipe end therein[,]; the first cuff forming a spigot member extending around the circumference of the first pipe end and the second cuff forming a bell member extending around the circumference of the second pipe end; and the spigot member of the first cuff being inserted into the bell member of the second cuff, thereby [the first and second cuffs] forming a mating bell and spigot [joint] coupling around the circumference of the first and second pipe ends [with the first, spigot cuff inserted into and joined to the second, bell cuff].

2. (Currently Amended) Components for a composite metal and plastic pipe assembly, comprising: first and second [pipe sections] metal pipes having respective first and second ends; a [first] plastic spigot cuff formed along the [periphery] circumference of the first pipe end and embedding the first pipe end therein, and a [second] plastic bell cuff formed along the [periphery] circumference of the second pipe end and embedding the second pipe end therein, the sizes of the [first and second] bell and spigot cuffs being adapted for inserting the spigot cuff into the bell cuff forming a [bell and spigot joint] coupling between the spigot cuff and the bell cuff and between the first metal pipe and the second metal pipe when the [first,] spigot cuff is inserted into the [second] bell cuff.

3. (New) The pipe assembly of claim 1, further comprising: a plastic coating formed on the end of the first pipe; a plastic coating formed on the end of the second pipe; a first plastic weld joining the first cuff and the end of the first pipe; and a second plastic weld joining the second cuff and the end of the second pipe

4. (New). The pipe assembly of claim 1, the first plastic cuff having a metal core embedded therein and the second plastic cuff having a metal core embedded therein.

5. (New) A method for adapting first and second pipes for coupling, comprising: molding a first plastic cuff around the circumference of an end of a first pipe, with the end of the first pipe embedded in the first plastic cuff and the first plastic cuff forming a spigot member extending along the circumference of the first pipe end; and molding a second plastic cuff around the circumference of an end of a second pipe, with the end of the second pipe embedded in the second plastic cuff and the second plastic cuff forming a bell member extending along the circumference of the second pipe end.

CLAIM AMENDMENTS (UNMARKED)

1. (Currently Amended) A composite, metal and plastic pipe assembly, comprising: first and second metal pipes having respective first and second ends; a first plastic cuff formed along the periphery of the first pipe end and embedding the first pipe end therein; a second plastic cuff formed along the periphery of the second pipe end and embedding the second pipe end therein; the first cuff forming a spigot member extending around the circumference of the first pipe end and the second cuff forming a bell member extending around the circumference of the second pipe end; and the spigot member of the first cuff being inserted into the bell member of the second cuff, thereby forming a mating bell and spigot coupling around the circumference of the first and second pipe ends.

2. (Currently Amended) Components for a composite metal and plastic pipe assembly, comprising: first and second metal pipes having respective first and second ends; a plastic spigot cuff formed along the circumference of the first pipe end and embedding the first pipe end therein, and a plastic bell cuff formed along the circumference of the second pipe end and embedding the second pipe end therein, the sizes of the bell and spigot cuffs being adapted for inserting the spigot cuff into the bell cuff forming a coupling between the spigot cuff and the bell cuff and between the first metal pipe and the second metal pipe when the spigot cuff is inserted into the bell cuff.

3. (New) The pipe assembly of claim 1, further comprising: a plastic coating formed on the end of the first pipe; a plastic coating formed on the end of the second pipe; a first plastic weld joining the first cuff and the end of the first pipe; and a second plastic weld joining the second cuff and the end of the second pipe

4. (New). The pipe assembly of claim 1, the first plastic cuff having a metal core embedded therein and the second plastic cuff having a metal core embedded therein.

5. (New) A method for adapting first and second pipes for coupling, comprising: molding a first plastic cuff around the circumference of an end of a first pipe, with the end of the first pipe embedded in the first plastic cuff and the first plastic cuff forming a spigot member extending along the circumference of the first pipe end; and molding a second plastic cuff around the circumference of an end of a second pipe, with the end of the second pipe embedded in the second plastic cuff and the second plastic cuff forming a bell member extending along the circumference of the second pipe end.